

Federico García Lorca
translated from the Spanish by Eitan Rubinfeld

In the Garden of Lunar Grapefruit

I bid farewell to my closest friends to embark on a short but dramatic journey. In a lustrous mirror I find, long before dawn, the suitcase that holds the clothing I am to wear in the unfamiliar land I am bound for.

The intense, chilling perfume of dawn beats mysteriously against the immense cliff of night.

On the blank page of the trembling heavens, the formation of a cloud, and beneath my balcony, a nightingale and a frog take wing on a sleepy blade of sound.

Calm but melancholy, I make my final preparations, sequestered by the subtlest emotion of wings and concentric circles. On the white wall of the room, coiled and rigid as a serpent in a museum, hangs the glorious sword my grandfather brandished in the war against King Carlos of Borbón.

Reverently I draw this sword, dressed with yellow rust like a white poplar. I adjust it before entering the garden, remembering I have that which sustains a grand, invisible fight; a static, violent fight with my secular enemy, the great dragon of common sentiment.

An acute and elegiac emotion for things that have not been, good and bad, large and small, invades the scenery of my eyes through glasses of violet light. A bitter emotion that compels me to this garden trembles in the tall plains of the sky.

The eyes of all creatures glance like phosphoric points on the wall of the future... things past are redolent of dry chaparral, orchards without fruit and rivers without water. No man ever fell backward over death. But I, for a moment, contemplating this abandoned, infinite scenery, have seen planes of life unpublished, multiple and superimposed like the pails of an endless water wheel.

Before leaving, I feel a sharp pain in my heart. My family is asleep; our house is silent. Dawn, revealing towers and lighting tree leaves one by one, outfits me in luminous lace.

Something I forgot... there is no question... so much time to prepare! And... god, what have I missed? Ah! A piece of wood... one of a kind from small pink cherry tree.



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I think I should dress up... from a vase on my nightstand, I pick a faded rose with an enraged but hieratic face. I place it in my left buttonhole.

It is time.

(First the fickle peeling of bells, next the crows of roosters.)

